

News Release

Missouri Farm Service Agency

www.fsa.usda.gov/mo

Parkade Center, Suite 225
601 Business Loop 70 West
Columbia, Missouri 65203

MISSOURI EXPANDS CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

Columbia, Mo., Oct. 23, 2006 — The Farm Service Agency continues to make strides in protecting public drinking water supplies by expanding the amount of eligible acreage for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). The expanded program was enacted on October 5, 2006, at a signing ceremony at the Missouri Department of Agriculture in Jefferson City, Mo.

CREP is a joint Federal-State land retirement conservation program targeted to address local, State and nationally significant agriculture-related environmental concerns. FSA is partnering with the Missouri Department of Conservation, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, the Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Missouri Department of Agriculture on the expanded program.

“Missouri can have up to 40 thousand acres enrolled in CREP,” said Tim Kelley, executive director for Missouri FSA. “Producers benefit financially by receiving annual rental payments, incentive and cost-share payments. All Missourians are impacted by the program’s affect on the environment, water quality, and improved wildlife habitat.”

Kelley said the original CREP agreement, signed in 2000, identified 83 drinking water reservoirs, serving 58 public drinking water supplies, in 36 counties that are at risk of nutrients and sediment from farms entering rural water supplies. The expanded agreement will include land in 79 Missouri counties.

Under the CREP agreement, landowners may enroll eligible land into the program for 14-15 years. The land must be removed from agricultural production and established to an approved vegetative cover as recommended by FSA and NRCS. In return, landowners receive the annual rental payments, plus cost-share assistance for up to 50 percent of the cost to establish the approved cover. In addition, state-funded incentive payments of \$125 to \$325 per acre are available, depending on the soil type and conservation practices established.

For land to be eligible, it must have been owned or operated for at least one year prior to enrollment and must be physically and legally capable of being cropped. Although the program normally targets land with cropping history, pasture land acreage adjacent to streams, ponds or other water source may also be enrolled.

-More-

For more information on the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, contact your local USDA Service Center or Soil and Water Conservation District office. Additional information can also be found online at www.fsa.usda.gov.

#

Photo:



State leaders gathered on Oct. 5, 2006, at the Missouri Department of Agriculture to sign the new Expanded CREP agreement. Partnering in the agreement are (L to R) Roger Hansen, state conservationist, Missouri Natural Resource Conservation Service; Doyle Childers, director, Missouri Department of Natural Resources; John Hoskins, director, Missouri Department of Conservation; Fred Ferrell, director, Missouri Department of Agriculture; and Tim Kelley, executive director, Missouri Farm Service Agency.